



Подробнее

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Today, in Britain, the world's oldest man died. Henry Allingham was 113 years old and fought in the war that was raging in Europe the year Cronkite was born. Allingham was the last remaining veteran of the original Royal Air Force, and the second-to-last remaining veteran of the Great War in England. He was born during the reign of Queen Victoria.

According to AP reports, he attributed his longevity to "cigarettes, whisky and wild, wild women."

#

So much has changed since March 30th, 1979. Three Mile Island is no longer the world's worst nuclear disaster, for one thing. The calm voice telling us about it is stilled. And I have gotten older.

Some of you reading this were probably not even born when it happened. It's history, for you. But for me, it's an event I covered, and it doesn't seem possible that it was thirty years, three months, and nineteen days ago.

So indulge me for a moment, and think about what it was like when *The China Syndrome* was in the theatres, the wind could shift at any moment, and we didn't know yet how the story would end.

Someday, we will all be history.


What sort of day was it? A day like all days, filled with those events that alter and illuminate our times ... and you were there.

--Walter Cronkite

Current Mood: quiet

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 [saoba](#) on July 18th, 2009 11:52 pm (UTC)

One of my friends, locally, is a former journalist who has led a full, varied and interesting life.

Of all she's done and seen, I envy her having met Uncle Walter *as a fellow journalist* above anything else.

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[ace_cub_reportr](#) on July 19th, 2009 12:10 am (UTC)

I did get to apologize for my dumbass about two decades later. We had an interesting conversation about come-to-Jesus moments over Vietnam. I didn't wash my hand for a week after I shook his.

He didn't seem taken aback by my confession, either. Either that legendary sangfroid, or it was the sort of thing that happened to him all the time.

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(Deleted comment)



[ace_cub_reportr](#) on July 19th, 2009 03:25 am (UTC)

In fairness, that was an unusual depth of reportage. But the fact of the matter is, in those days, news anchors had rather more control than currently of the format of the broadcast, and they extemporized a good deal.

Cronkite also broke the news of former president Johnson's death while *still on the telephone* with a correspondent*.

The only thing I've seen in recent days to approximate it was Peter Jennings and Ted Koppel's virtuoso tag-team performance during the immediate aftermath of 9/11.

*This correspondent later went on to become the president of NBC.

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[jennygadget](#) on July 19th, 2009 08:00 pm (UTC)

"The only thing I've seen in recent days to approximate it was Peter Jennings and Ted Koppel's virtuoso tag-team performance during the immediate aftermath of 9/11."

That's interesting that you say that....

I was unemployed and therefore watching a lot of TV news that day and in the days following and I can't say that I even remember anything either of them said. (Maybe I had the wrong channel on?) What I remember most when I think of that day and news coverage of it (aside from the images, of course) is that it was the first major event where I got a huge portion of my news of the event not just via the internet*, but from largely unfiltered first-hand accounts from people who were there.

The (tv) news didn't tell me that New Yorkers wandered the streets that day, dazed, covered in dust, and unsure of how to get home. My brother did when he told me about giving shelter to alums that wandered in the front doors of his college, with only hazy memories of how they got there. And it wasn't from any news outlet that I first heard that Americans traveling and living abroad had been warned a week before (?) to be especially cautious, that came via my aunt from my cousin who was studying in Ankara at the time.

All stuff that I would have heard eventually without the 'net, but it certainly made a difference in my perception of that day that I got all of it pretty much all together and right away rather than in bits and peices over time. Also, that I got it from people other than TV anchors.

*yes, the TV was on, but it was on in the background as I refreshed my internet browser and talked with my brother on IM.

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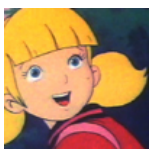


[ace_cub_reportr](#) on July 19th, 2009 08:03 pm (UTC)

I was working.

But we had the TV on.

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[jennygadget](#) on July 19th, 2009 08:16 pm (UTC)

Yeah, I'd imagine most places did. A part of me thinks that it would have been even weirder and felt very wrong to be in a place where one was supposed to be doing something other than staring at the TV/computer. But another part of me was selfishly, stupidly, jealous of my parents who got to go off and teach class and have distractions that day. And other people to talk to. ('cuz, you know, I'm the one for whom that day really sucked, right? rolls eyes at myself)

In any case, I'm now curious if there is a way to hunt down the coverage you speak of, as I either missed it or was too much in shock for it to register at the time.

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[ace cub reportr](#) on July 19th, 2009 08:31 pm (UTC)
Conveniently, [it's available here](#).

My job is one that was directly affected by the events of the day, and you're right. It was better to have something useful to do.

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